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ABSTRACT

This publication describes efforts in the United Kingdom (UK) to develop mutually beneficial, collaborative partnerships between businesses and communities that promote digital inclusion (access to information and communication technologies). Case studies of different kinds of relationships are listed, including UK online centers, schools, events in public spaces, events for voluntary and community groups, supporting the use of ICT by community/voluntary organizations, computer refurbishing, and innovation in the use of technology. (Some of the benefits to businesses are as follows: (1) developing brand reputation and customer loyalty; (2) networking with other businesses and local and national government; (3) improving recruitment and retention of staff; (4) developing employee skills; (5) developing new market places for goods and services; (6) understanding market opportunities by working with customers in new ways; and (7) increasing the number of people who can make use of e-business. Benefits to the community are that collaboration enables communities of all kinds to communicate and learn in new ways and it helps find innovative ways to tackle social problems. Advice for community-based organizations that wish to approach businesses and research companies include the following: (1) examine the needs of the organization; (2) locate business that might have special interests in the organization's charitable causes; (3) research potential companies; and (4) ensure that the time necessary to manage relationships is available.) Contains "next steps" for business and community organizations as well as a list of resources. (MO)

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BUSINESS *in the*

COMMUNITY

ED 481 831

digitally included

business – community partnerships to promote the use of information and communication technologies

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comm.unity is a national Business in the Community campaign which inspires and engages business in:

- supporting the communitys' use of information and communication technologies (ICT)
- the innovative use of ICT in the regeneration of communities
- corporate responsibility for the ICT and new media sectors

comm.unity's leadership companies are:

AOL UK
Citizens Online
Cisco Systems Ltd
Department for Education and Skills
Fujitsu Services
GUS plc
IBM UK Ltd
Office of the e-Envoy
Oracle Corporation UK & Ireland

These companies have identified concerns about the social consequences of people's exclusion from the use of ICT; as well as the business implications of the lack of skills in the labour market and the unequal access to e-business markets.

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I honestly believe that the winning companies of this century will be those who prove with their actions that they can be profitable and increase social value - companies that both do well and do good... Increasingly, shareowners, customers, partners and employees are going to vote with their feet - rewarding those companies that fuel social change through business. This is simply the new reality of business - one that we should and must embrace.

Carly Fiorina
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer,
Hewlett Packard

Foreword

Our future prosperity relies on the creation of a dynamic and successful economy. In this digital age, an essential component is supporting the transition to a knowledge-based society, with e-business opportunities maximised in the emerging global market.

The government aims to make all of its services available online, to bring a new efficiency to our interactions with citizens. Our vision cannot be achieved if sections of society do not have access to the benefits of information and communication technologies (ICT). Much has already been done to address this. The network of UK online centres, for example, has been created to provide disadvantaged people and communities with the opportunity to get on line. But we still have some way to go.

This document celebrates examples of partnerships involving business, to promote the inclusive use of ICT. Experience has borne out the effectiveness of these equal partnerships and the benefits to both parties.

Your leadership and action in this area will make a difference so I encourage you to read this brochure with interest and ask how you too can get involved.

Ivan Lewis
Minister for Young People and Adult Skills, Department for Education and Skills

Introduction

Two cornerstones of society - communication and the sharing of information - have been transformed by the new technologies of our digital age. This has had an impact in all areas of our lives, such as the way we work, how communities organise, how we do business and how government interacts with citizens.
We can be sure that the phenomenal rate of change and development are set to continue. However, this revolution has not been an inclusive one. If, for example, you are an older person, a disabled person, or have a lower income, you are less likely to be benefiting from the full use of information and communication technologies (ICT). "Digital exclusion" maps on to social exclusion. However, since ICT is changing society by creating new opportunities for social and economic regeneration, digital exclusion can actually reinforce marginalisation and increase social exclusion.

Digital inclusion implies not just access to ICT, but also the skills, confidence and motivation to use it. Why should business be concerned about this issue? Because business has a stake in the wellbeing of its locality, since it trades in and seeks employees from the community. E-business opportunities will be limited if certain sections of society aren't online. 90% of new jobs require at least basic ICT skills. Businesses of all sizes stand to benefit from a digitally inclusive society.

There are many ways in which business, whether micro, small/medium sized, or large corporation, can promote digital inclusion. This brochure is full of case studies and ideas to inspire business-community partnerships. Investing in the community does not need to take the form of large cash donations. In fact, making use of the full resources of your business, whether by supporting employees to volunteer, by donating equipment, or by letting a group use your premises, can be of much greater value. And the rewards of this reach beyond those felt by the people and organisations supported. Your business can benefit from a better motivated, well developed workforce, your reputation will improve, and creative energies can be released.

My own company, Oracle Corporation UK, is actively engaged in supporting schemes to widen access to the digital age. We have seen benefits for all stakeholders in this work. As Chair of the comm.unity leadership team, I encourage each and every business to read on, be inspired and then take up the challenge. For community partners, think of involving business in your initiatives. In comm.unity we'll be delighted to assist, and look forward to publishing your case study on our website.

Ian Smith
Chair of Business in the Community's comm.unity leadership team

SVP & Managing Director,
Oracle UK, Ireland & South Africa

Business - Community partnerships as win – win strategies

Business has a number of resources that can be fruitfully used in collaborative partnerships to tackle social issues. Models of how business can invest in communities are described below. Case studies demonstrate the specific application of these models to initiatives promoting digital inclusion. With signposts to further resources, we hope this brochure will serve as an inspiration and as a guide on how to develop business-community partnerships to tackle digital exclusion.

Community investment by business

Business partners, investors, customers and future or current employees judge a company on a wider range of criteria than ever before. A company is judged on how it treats its workforce and the environment, how it markets its goods/services and what impact it has on the wider community. Community involvement is about the relationship between a company and the community in which it operates. **Corporate Community Investment (CCI)**, is a strategic approach to community involvement, which enables a company to focus its resources on an area of the community most in need. CCI is sustainable when both the company and the community benefit from activities. For the company, as 'enlightened self interest', CCI should receive the same rigorous attention as any other business expenditure or function, involving:

- alignment with the business.
- objectives and evaluation.
- clearly defined goals.
- a focus on results.

96% of Business in the Community member companies rated improved relations with their local communities as an important or very important reason for community involvement.

What does business have to offer?

STAR; skills time and resources, encompasses three of the most important assets a company (of any size) can make available to the community:

- Skills - technical expertise, management expertise.
- Time - employee time provided through volunteering.
- Resources - equipment, cash donations, premises.

7 P's; describe in more detail possibilities for community involvement:

- Power - companies often have influence, which can be used in lobbying and campaigning exercises and in negotiating with suppliers.
- People - employees can devote time to generic volunteering and also share professional skills with voluntary/community groups or mentor individuals.
- Promotions - Cause Related Marketing (see section 6) involves a company working promoting a cause at the same time as selling products (e.g. Tesco's Computers for Schools).
- Purchasing - companies have greater purchasing power and can use this to negotiate better deals for community groups.
- Profits – contributions can take the form of cash donations for projects, sponsorship of events/publications and matched donations for grant funding.
- Product – a company's product can be provided to a community group when it is surplus to business requirements. Organisations such as In Kind Direct can help facilitate product donations. Services such as training (spare places on a course) would also qualify here.
- Premises - many groups are short of space. Companies can provide training or meeting rooms and host events for community organisations or even host the organisation itself.

Benefits to the business and employee

Business in the Community member companies, who have invested in their communities, have reported many gains including:

- Developing brand reputation and customer loyalty.
- Networking with other businesses and with local and national government.
- Improving recruitment and retention of staff and increasing staff motivation.
- Developing the skills of employees; such as team working, planning and implementation, communication, project and change management, listening skills, customer focus and innovative thinking.

In addition, projects specifically designed to promote digital inclusion and the use of ICT in regenerating communities, can have these further benefits:

- Increasing the number of skilled, potential employees.
- Developing new market places for goods and services.
- Understanding market opportunities by working with customers in new ways.
- Increasing the number of people who can make use of e-business.

For small companies, employee volunteering can act as a highly effective, and cost-effective, staff development programme as well as raising the profile of the company with potential clients.

Benefits to the community

As well as the benefits of promoting digital inclusion (resulting in improved access to information and communication and a better ICT skills base for individuals) communities can benefit from the use of ICT in regeneration when this:

- Enables communities of all kinds to communicate and learn in new ways.
- Finds innovative ways to tackle social problems.

In addition, supporting the community/voluntary sectors' use of ICT will assist those who support communities to be more effective. Organisations that work in partnership with business can also increase their impact by accessing the resources (7p's) described above.

Opinion Leader Research questioned 50 chairmen and chief executives about their views on community involvement:

- 88% believed that companies that develop an active community affairs programme are likely to have a more committed and happy workforce.
- 85% believed that a reputation for being socially responsive and responsible is becoming a competitive advantage.
- 79% believed that community investment would play an increasingly important part in the strategies of companies in the future.

A TimeBank survey of over 200 top businesses, on employee volunteering, showed that:

94% think volunteering adds to the skills of their workforce.

58% say voluntary work can be more valuable than experience gained in paid employment.

25% offer paid time off to employee volunteers.

15% allow sabbaticals for volunteering projects.

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2.0
Getting started - ideas for developing partnerships

In the following sections we provide models and case studies for business - community partnerships to promote digital inclusion. There are opportunities for short term projects or long-term strategic relationships, for partnerships with small business as well as large corporates. The case studies have been selected to demonstrate the variety of partnerships that have formed, as well as the breadth of issues tackled. Possibilities are, however, limitless and simply depend on matching specific community needs to the goals of a particular business, while considering the skill sets required when volunteering is involved.

There are many **skills** of value in promoting this work so all employees can be involved, not just those technically capable. Useful skills include:

Technical Skills: website and database development, networking, PC installation, trouble shooting, procurement advice and IT strategy development.
Other Skills: mentoring, marketing, business planning, people skills, "leg-work" like leaflet dropping, teaching software packages and supporting learners.

At the end of the brochure are signposts for more information and next steps. Contacts for the comm.unity campaign of Business in the Community are given on the back page, we would be delighted to assist you in getting this work off the ground.

2.1 Advice for community based organisations

Think strategically about which businesses to approach and research companies before you approach - this can save you time in the long-term.

- Examine the needs in your organisation (long and short-term), whether you want help with business planning, marketing, volunteers for a specific project, sponsorship for a publication, etc.
- Look at the 7P's relating to what business has to offer (think beyond just cash) and consider the business case for involvement.
- Look for any particular types of business that might have a special interest in your charitable cause.
- Look for businesses who are more likely to be interested in the type of support you want, and the business benefits you have identified; e.g. large employers may be interested in promoting volunteering, companies selling consumer goods are more likely to be interested in boosting their public reputation. If your organisation or project is locally focused, look for smaller local businesses or branches of larger businesses based in your area.
- Research potential companies, check to see if they have published information on community partner criteria. For large companies the first point of contact is likely to be a community affairs manager, for smaller companies get a named person to write to, this may well be the managing director.
- Show them your project - seeing is believing and explain the added benefit of their involvement to both your organisation and the work you do; e.g. match funding, up-skilling your volunteers and employees.
- Be sensitive to differences in culture but don't be put off, similarities are greater than differences.
- Ensure you can manage relationships and the time that that involves.
- Build the relationship over time and integrate it into your development strategy.
- For more information contact BCConnections.

The Internet has the power to connect communities of all kinds. We're always thrilled at AOL UK when we can support projects to develop communication across communities and clearly this is also of benefit to our core business.

Katrina Giles
Head of Corporate Responsibility, AOL UK

There is no doubt that volunteering exposes us more directly to society's needs and provides insights not available in the workplace – seeing is believing.

Lawrence Churchill
Chief Executive, Zurich Financial Services,
UK, Ireland and International Life

Travel Holidays
Group
I WANT AN AOL CREDIT CARD FOR
1.9% AP
TRY AOL FOR FREE
Disabled
Don't let your disability deter you from taking a holiday! Check out our features for inspiration, or read our useful travel information!
Sleep easy!
Exclusive offers for members
Disabled Travel Messages
SEARCH Travel
Useful links

case studies

AOL and John Grooms

AOL UK is the leading online interactive services provider to the UK. AOL UK's community investment programme is designed specifically for those who are most likely to benefit from access to online services but are least likely to obtain these by traditional means. The program also underpins fundamental business objectives including expanding the diversity of content and services to AOL members. The programme targets people with disabilities and children and young people outside mainstream education as these groups are most responsive to AOL's core values of ease of use, online safety and focus on the family.

The programme has three focus areas: connectivity - assistance and support for organisations working with socially excluded groups going online for the first time and simultaneously integrating the Internet into the organisation's operations; developing online content for socially excluded groups where this expands the overall AOL UK offering to all subscribers; and policy - raising awareness of digital divide issues amongst opinion formers and policymakers.

As an example of a current partnership, AOL UK works with John Grooms, a charity offering housing services to disabled people. AOL UK has provided online access, training and support for residents and staff at each of the eleven residential homes across the UK. This project resulted in AOL UK staff and the project participants working on unique online content that has also brought substantial benefits to AOL members with disabilities. AOL UK is currently working on a pilot project with John Grooms residents to promote use of the Internet within the local community. Residents who are Internet enthusiasts will encourage members of the local community to try out their IT facilities in an informal atmosphere and sign-post people to training courses for beginners. Using the residents as mentors and educators in their local community builds on community relations and breaks down the barrier of the digital divide.

For further information contact:
Commsco@aol.com
www.aol.co.uk/info/responsibility/

2.2 UK online centres

An excellent way to promote digital inclusion is to support UK online centres. 6000 centres across the UK aim to provide Internet and e-mail access to everyone that wants it, near to where they live.

The centres could be in an internet café on the high street, in a library, in a college, a community centre, a village hall or anywhere available to the public. Many offer training courses at a variety of levels.

Business involvement in this government supported initiative, could take the following forms:

- Provide of a centre with equipment and/or professional support - this might be surplus product, technical or other professional advice, website assistance and mentoring of staff.
- Run an event to help the centre market itself (see section 3.1 page 11) support the development of a marketing strategy.
- Establish a volunteering scheme to mentor users of the centre, encouraging them to expand their skills and bring friends/family to the centre. Some users may need assistance in basic literacy and numeracy. These needs can be met whilst working at the users own pace on developing ICT skills.
- Spare places on relevant training courses that your business runs? Make these available to staff or centre users where they don't have access to such courses.
- Provide work experience placements for users that have developed ICT skills and need support in finding employment.

GRANADA TELEVISION

IT'snevertoolate
Granada Television's e-Learning campaign

case studies

Granada

Granada's new community project hopes to attract people in deprived communities back into learning by allowing them to access computers at their local sports clubs, such as Liverpool Football Club. As many sports stadia are based in deprived communities, and clubs are always looking for ways to get involved with their communities, the proposition fits neatly. As a media organisation Granada can use the power of the camera to highlight how people who are struggling (often against enormous odds) get back into learning to improve their lives.

The projects have been founded on partnerships, built over time, to ensure that plans fit to those of the community. This meant getting together the Lifelong Learning Partnerships, the sports clubs, the local Further Education College, Learn Direct and the University For Industry, various community groups and in some cases other private companies.

Nine "It's Never Too Late" centres will be opened over 2003 with funding for the project from the UK Online Centres initiative some revenue from the New Opportunities Fund, Granada itself and considerable in-kind contributions from many other organisations. At the beginning of 2003, two of the centres already opened are full of learners. It seems as if using sport as a hook to persuade people back into learning is a powerful tool.

Each site is staffed by the local Further Education College. Many of these site managers are themselves 'late returners' who are hugely enthusiastic about the possibilities for learning using IT. Each site also has a 'facilitator' or 'welcomer', a local person who will make new learners feel at home. Learners will be able to do whatever they want to do, whether it's surfing the net, learning to use email, studying for a particular qualification or improving basic skills.

An intranet is being developed between all nine sites to encourage communication between the different sports clubs. Additionally, an interactive website will encourage learners through competitions and incentives such as 'learner of the week' with prizes from the Clubs such as match tickets and sports kit. Sports based learning materials are also being developed through Granada Learning, Granada's software publishing company.

Granada is making three half hour documentaries about the project for transmission in May and September 2003 to encourage learners to recognise the benefits of harnessing IT skills and the openings will be featured in Granada reports. The project will highlight Granada's corporate social responsibility whilst the community will benefit enormously from the learning centres which will all have state-of-the-art equipment.

Jane Luca, Controller of Regional Affairs at Granada speaking after the official opening of our first project with St Helen's Rugby League Club said: "I am enormously proud that we have opened the first of our "IT's Never Too" Late e-learning centres. It's the culmination of a huge amount of work over the last couple of years. We have broken new ground by creating partnerships between public and private sectors to create these e-learning centres. I'm convinced that uniting sport, education and television in a motivating environment will encourage those people with no access to computers back into learning."

For further information contact:
Vic.mclellan@granadamedia.com
www.granadamedia.com

Camden ITeC greatly values the positive relationship it has enjoyed with Cable & Wireless since it was founded in 1982. The wide variety of support provided has assisted the ITeC in delivering a high quality service tailored to the needs of local residents. Without the financial and other practical support given by Cable & Wireless and its employees, the services provided by the ITeC would not be at the level they are today.

Winston Castello
Chief Executive, Camden ITeC

CABLE & WIRELESS

Camden iTeC future learning

case studies

Cable & Wireless and Camden ITeC

Cable & Wireless has a long-standing tradition of good corporate citizenship and is committed to making a positive social contribution to the local communities in which it operates. As a result of this commitment, Cable & Wireless has worked in partnership with UK online ICT training centre, Camden ITeC, for over 20 years – offering employment-related IT training to disadvantaged communities close to Cable & Wireless' headquarters in the London Borough of Camden.

Since the launch of Camden ITeC in 1982, IT skills have become intrinsically linked to employability. Yet many people continue to enter the workplace without IT skills and hands-on employment related experience.

Today, Camden ITeC is working to provide unemployed people with the skills, qualifications and experience needed to gain employment. The ITeC works with local employers to provide a range of training courses for local people at two IT Learning Centres in North London – Kentish Town and Hampstead Road. Courses include basic skills training, computer literacy skills, NVQ training and Modern Apprenticeships.

Having provided cash donations, core funding, staff involvement and gifts-in-kind over a 20-year period, Cable & Wireless is now supporting the ITeC's ICT Open Learning Centre in Kentish Town - helping the ITeC to extend its local reach. Now a designated UK online centre, the facility is proving popular with retired people, lone parents and residents from black and ethnic minority groups who have little or no experience of using the Internet.

Funding from Cable & Wireless is also being used to develop an online learning programme, which will allow those that are unable to access centre-based learning to take advantage of the many training opportunities offered by Camden ITeC, via remote learning.

Each year over 500 people access course based learning via Camden ITeC, with more than 6,000 young people receiving numeracy, literacy, IT and business administration training. Many more take advantage of short-term IT taster lessons and skills training, with the ITeC also providing tailored training packages to suit individual needs and facilities to support those for whom English is not their first language. The progress of the ITeC's students into employment demonstrates the impact of the work of the ITeC – with over 80% of students on some courses obtaining employment.

"Camden ITeC's ability to demonstrate year on year impact is at the heart of our retained commitment. Community investments don't always provide a financial return so you can't evaluate them in the same way as a traditional investment - yet the return is in the impact of our investment - based on the thousands of people that receive help and support from the ITeC each year."
Joe Franses, Community Investment Manager, Cable & Wireless.

For further information contact:
community@cw.com
www.camden-itec.co.uk
www.cw.com/community

Schools

Education – business partnerships have demonstrated many ways in which business can support the learning and development of both young people and adults (see www.bitc.org.uk/education for more information). Supporting learning through ICT in schools is high on the government agenda and business can help by:

- Mentoring IT managers in schools.
- Providing places on IT training courses for teachers
- Supporting teachers with their ICT skills within schools
- Providing hardware and software that the school can use (refurbished computers can be donated via Tools for Schools: www.tfs.org.uk).
- Offering work experience to young people.
- Schools may need help in developing an IT strategy and in particular assistance in understanding the best way to support their IT.
- Establishing events to show pupils and staff the creative use of SET in teaching/learning.
- comm.unity has more information on IT in schools including strategy development and technical projects.

IBM

case studies

IBM - KidSmart

IBM developed the KidSmart Early Learning programme to introduce computers to children of pre-school age. Introduced in the UK two years ago, there are now 125 KidSmart installations in 16 Local Education Authorities across the country. IBM plans to install a further 150 units this year plus another 300 units over the next two years. The settings are mainly in disadvantaged areas, in line with IBM's policy of helping to address need and reducing the "digital divide" between children from low-income families and those with greater opportunities. The settings include play-groups, nurseries, early excellence centres, family centres and nursery classrooms.

In order to find suitable settings for KidSmart and provide essential training, IBM worked with the British Association for Early Childhood Education (BAECE) known as Early Education. This has been a very effective partnership and has contributed significantly to the success of the project.

A report written by Professor John Siraj-Blatchford from the University of Cambridge and Professor Iram Siraj-Blatchford from the University of London, found that the KidSmart programme has led to 'significant improvements in every area of the information and communications technology (ICT) curriculum within a year.' Children have taken to the KidSmart centres eagerly and both parents and educational practitioners have been delighted with the improved access to new technology. IBM hopes to encourage online collaboration between nurseries using KidSmart where work could be exchanged and projects shared.

For further information contact:
wakefim@uk.ibm.com

Business in the Community's FastForward Research, (2002) showed that 2 in 3 business leaders across Europe believe responsible business practices promotes innovation by increasing learning from outside and promoting a broader perspective

REUTERS

case studies

Reuters Foundation and Langdon Park School

The Reuters Foundation Computer Room at Langdon Park School in London was opened as part of Reuters Foundation's 'Adopt-A-School' programme, working with five secondary schools on five continents. Reuters staff around the world this year investigated schools in Beijing, London, Moscow, Nairobi and New York in search of those that lacked IT training facilities and who wished to enter into a relationship with the charity arm of Reuters.

"The magnificent suite that Reuters has provided will be used for both study support and for our lessons. The facility will enhance the curriculum experience and be used outside of the normal school day. We are extremely grateful to Reuters." Chris Dunne, Langdon Park's head teacher.

Customer Support staff installed the equipment in a secure area set aside by the school and plan to run lunchtime IT sessions over the coming year. The IT sessions will be just one of a range of activities designed to support the school.

"We want to use our skills, expertise and enthusiasm to help the local community. I would like to see some of these students coming to Reuters for jobs in the future. This is just the start of an ongoing relationship."
Martin Yates, Reuters Head of Customer Support for Europe.

For further information contact:
www.reuters.com/csr

American Express saw highly positive increases in staff satisfaction surveys amongst the group of staff who were volunteering in a local school, compared with a control group of non-volunteers.

3.0

Partnerships for short term projects

This can be done as a bi-partnership or tri-partnership, whereby a centre is linked to a business team of employed volunteers, and potentially also a community group with a client base, e.g. a refugee centre, an old persons centre etc.

Skills needed: person skills, marketing skills, event management

Risks: marketing direct to the public may not generate enough people on the day. Community groups are relying on their clients making themselves available and circumstances may mean the community group has to cancel. This takes more management time than the average team based volunteering opportunity.

Suggestions: project management should lie with the volunteer, even if the community group does the majority of marketing. Contingencies need to be in place and every effort should be made to engage a client group for example laying on a free bus and food.

PRICEWATERHOUSECOOPERS

case studies

PricewaterhouseCoopers and MAD 4 I.T.

Year 6 children from three primary schools in Southwark – Snowsfields, Grange, and Charles Dickens were invited to participate in an employee volunteering initiative called MAD 4 I.T. The children were given access to specialised Information Technology and multimedia equipment with the help of 22 PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) volunteers. The children were able to have hands-on experience working within 4 Technology Zone Workstations called: The Future Zone, Internet Fun Zone, My Own Zone and The Discovery Zone. They were given access to specialised computer equipment on board the Karrot Mobile Internet Café and afterwards inside PwC's offices at London Bridge. Having one-to-one attention from the volunteers gave the children the confidence to explore the technology zones and work on equipment that they would very rarely come across during the school day. They were even able to make their own music, experimenting with on-line mixing and virtual decks.

A great part of this unique day, was the ability to work alongside the Metropolitan Police Service to give the children access to the Karrot Mobile Internet Café. The MPS-led partnership project called Karrot addresses issues of truancy, crime and social exclusion amongst young people in the London Borough of Southwark by means of a Reward Card Scheme, a Mobile Internet Café and an Activities Programme. The Karrot Mobile Internet Café is the project's main IT resource and was one of two focal points of activities for the event. PwC are supporters of the Karrot project. The whole experience showed how community partners can work together for the benefit of local children.

One PwC employee said: "Everyone was smiling and the children were animated. Our volunteers were interacting brilliantly with them. At that point I knew the day was going to be great."

For further information contact:
lindsey.nash@uk.pwcglobal.com

Events in public spaces

Public spaces, such as shopping centres, are great places to show people the Internet in short taster sessions. Information can be provided about UK online centres/introductory courses. Such a project has huge value when cross sector partnerships are developed of relevant local organisations. To jointly market a number of public events, a steering group will need to be established, with an overall project manager.

Skills needed: excellent project management skills and partnership development skills, plus people skills in volunteers and technical support for the event.

Risks: partners need to give information on events in sufficient time, technical issues of the chosen locations need to be addressed early on, e.g. Internet access. Volunteers need to be hugely enthusiastic about the Internet and dealing with members of the public. Much energy is needed to engage passers-by and it is important that sufficient follow-up information is to hand, with processes to link interested people to learning centres.

WebCamden.com represented an exciting web challenge, by bringing together local people, business and the community, to create a snapshot of Camden, on the web, in a single day. We hoped this will help build local pride in Camden, whilst encouraging more people to engage, experiment with and enjoy ICT.

Simon Davey
Managing Director, Omega Alpha Limited

case studies

Omega Alpha – collaborative action for WebCamden.com

WebCamden.com was a partnership project between the community of Camden, a UK online centre (Camden ITeC) and two London businesses (Omega Alpha and Reuters). It's aim was to improve community access to ICT, stimulate engagement in ICT for all ages and to build a sense of local community on the web.

The WebCamden.com Challenge was to build a live community snapshot website of life in Camden on a single day. To make this happen, we needed volunteers to search the web for local information and to help build the technical bits of the website and publish information. Volunteers went out into Camden to find the views of local people (and take photographs) and we published these on the web in addition to a live running weblog. Local people visited the UK online centre to publish their own stories (and pictures) live on the day. The site grew as the hours passed by and the finished version went live at 6.30pm, nine hours later.

To build your own community snapshot website, you will need:

- one UK online centre
- a patient project manager
- a basic website design, structure and a content management plan
- a team of volunteers to interview local residents and publish information to the web
- technical support for those nerve-wracking moments when everything breaks
- enthusiastic local residents (because it means nothing without them)

WebCamden.com involved a team of ten business volunteers, eight students, six staff from the UK online centre and a cast of many from the local community (including the Mayor).

Benefits to the business:

- Profile in the local community
- Opportunity to practice risk management on a live project
- Better understanding of the local community
- Opportunity to work with a broad range of people and learn some new skills
- Huge amount of fun and a great team building exercise.

Benefits to the community group:

- Project helped promote the UK online centre and raise awareness of training needs
- Improves profile of Camden generally
- Gets local people more engaged in ICT
- Helps bring diverse types of people together (improves social capital)

For further information contact:
www.webcamden.com
community@omega-alpha.com
www.omega-alpha.com
www.camden-itec.co.uk

vodafone
UK FOUNDATION

YouthNet UK

case studies

The Vodafone UK Foundation and YouthNet UK - the e-bus> & SURFiT

The purpose of SURFiT and e_bus> projects is to provide Internet access to young people who for whatever reason don't have their own access. They are YouthNet's direct response to addressing the digital divide within the UK. The projects aim to be socially and geographically inclusive in the distribution of information provided by YouthNet's award winning website for 16-25 year olds, www.TheSite.org.

Through the SURFiT project, Vodafone and YouthNet have provided 105 internet access kiosks to drop-in centres and other youth centres to provide young people with free, fast access to information, the Internet and the everyday benefits of this technology, such as email, that most of us take for granted.

SURFiT gives access to technology to those who need it most, it builds the capacity of other voluntary organisations and provides a wealth of information and support to enable young disadvantaged people to make informed and intelligent choices affecting their lives.

SURFiT has already provided a permanent electronic address to young homeless people, enabling them to keep in touch with families, friends, housing associations and potential employers. It provides opportunities for IT skills sharing and development as well as peer learning.

The e_bus> is a double decker bus equipped with state-of-the-art high-speed Internet access equipment. The e_bus> will take Internet access to young people and engage them 'where they are at'. It will tour festivals, concerts, events, rural and disadvantaged areas. This project extends the SURFiT proposition and takes the opportunity for young people to develop computer and Internet literacy to their door.

The project is run for the benefit of young people across the UK and aims to provide access to between 10,000 and 20,000 young people. The revenue generated from hiring the e_bus> to the corporate sector ensures that YouthNet will remain able to offer the e_bus> free-of-charge to community and voluntary sector partners.

Vodafone has added to its financial support of YouthNet with technical and PR input and advice. In addition, Vodafone is also providing technical and logistical advice, support and consultancy for the development of YouthNet's newest project, askTheSite, which is scheduled for launch in autumn 2003.

For further information contact:
vodafoneukfoundation@vodafone.co.uk
marcus@youthnet.org,
www.youthnet.org
www.thesite.org

3.2 Events for voluntary and community groups

An event to draw together a number of volunteers and a number of voluntary organisations to look at a variety of IT issues, is a great way to encourage new partnerships. Whilst projects can't be delivered in-house, such charity fairs give an opportunity to bring together volunteers and potential partners, to meet each other. It is also an opportunity to bring in voluntary sector umbrella organisations who support the sectors' use of IT and gives community groups a chance to network and share experiences.

Skills needed: presentation skills, event management skills, specific technical skills of volunteers, according to workshops offered.

Risks: assume that up to half the groups who say they will come won't. Technical knowledge of attendees will vary so finding the best level to talk at is a challenge.

Suggestions: Find a way to present the event so that groups find it attractive and prioritise it, e.g. "Better information management to help your organisation run more smoothly" rather than "How to develop databases." Ensure there is time for networking and individual attention.

As an individual you are making a contribution to others who are often less advantaged, you often develop friendships that go beyond a "business" relationship, you gain awareness of the wider community, and you achieve a level of personal satisfaction in putting your business & technical skills to very effective use out side of the day to day commercial world you work in.

John Baker
Manager Services Quality, Fujitsu Services

FUJITSU

case studies

Fujitsu Services - IT Charity fair

For the last 2 years Fujitsu Services has worked with several other businesses (for example CIS, Cap Gemini Ernst and Young, Vertex, Barclays Bank and Shell) to help deliver MAD 4 I.T. In 2001 volunteers helped with the build, delivery, installation and support of PCs into community organisations in the Manchester area.

In 2002 businesses collaborated to design, document and deliver short seminars over a 2 day period to local community group representatives. Seminars included PC Terminology, PC maintenance and support, Web Site design, build and development, email, Microsoft Office products and networking.

These IT charity fairs provided local community groups with both the hardware capability and the application knowledge to enhance the communication, presentation and administration of their organisations, not only locally but in some cases worldwide.

Working with community groups (such as: EDGE (Ethnic Disabled Group Emerged) and Pavilion Community Association) is a regular source of both personal motivation and personal development for Fujitsu Services employees.

As an organisation the companies involved are helping to develop the communities that they are part of, they are demonstrating that their business cares, the staff involved are developing their knowledge skills and abilities including their interpersonal skills and often their awareness of what people actually use their products and services for.

For further information contact:
John.Baker@services.fujitsu.com

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C1

Supporting the use of ICT by community/voluntary organisations

These projects make use of professional skills. Organisations particularly need help in developing IT strategies. This may be a very short document for a small organisation, but will still clarify the organisations current IT use, the vision for IT use and the route to achieving goals. Once this is understood, work on specific projects can be placed in the wider strategic context.

Skills needed: professional IT skills and training skills, also understanding in IT in the voluntary sector.

Risks: ill-defined projects by a sector which aren't clear on the use/benefits of ICT, issues of sustainability are key here. Strategy development is perhaps the most useful piece of work, but more creative thinking will be needed to create a good press story.

Suggestions: IT4COMMUNITIES is an initiative developed by a cross IT sector partnership, which aims to support the voluntary sectors use of IT by promoting the volunteering of professional IT skills. The website (www.it4communities.org.uk) is a gold mine of helpful tips for both volunteers and organisations and should be introduced/used as part of volunteer training and project planning. In addition, this is a good resource for companies wishing to find charities with IT needs and for charities wishing to find IT volunteers.

Parity recognises the importance of making our skills and expertise available to the local community, particularly in the area of ICT. Through comm.unity our staff are actively involved in supporting a range of local initiatives throughout Northern Ireland. We would encourage other employers to support their employees' involvement in the community.

Shane Mackle
General Manager, Parity Training

PARITY Training
the business enabler

case studies

Parity Training and Upper Andersonstown Community Forum

Parity Training is a specialist company providing quality learning in IT and management skills to over 40,000 delegates a year nationwide. Research undertaken by Business in the Community, through the comm.unity campaign, identified a serious gap in Information and Communications Technology (ICT) training among community organisations throughout Belfast - specifically in relation to what training was most valuable for students wanting to pursue employment in the ICT sector. Trainers from Parity worked with Upper Andersonstown Community Forum to review their existing ICT provision and advise where improvements could be made.

Upper Andersonstown Community Forum (UACF) established an IT suite at its premises in Belfast. Research in the Upper Andersonstown area has identified over 300 people who are interested in developing their ICT skills and experience - men and women, young and old people. UCAF, like many community organisations, was unclear what training would be most beneficial to the local residents. While many residents simply wanted to develop ICT skills for domestic use, UCAF wanted to ensure that the training it was giving would enable local people to further their education, learning and, most importantly, employability.

Parity Training provided advice for UCAF on:

- ICT courses that are recognised as valuable by employers
- Employer requirements in terms of ICT; skills/experience
- Market trends in the ICT sector
- Qualification routes
- European Computer Driving Licence qualification.

With the support of Parity, UCAF has become better informed about which ICT courses to offer that shall directly impact upon students' employability. This has bridged a recognised information gap for UCAF, which was previously unsure of the building blocks of training to provide students who were seeking to develop their ICT skills.

For further information contact:
www.parity.net

ORACLE

case studies

Oracle and The National Library for the Blind

The National Library for the Blind (NLB) won the ERICA 2000 award, an initiative from Ericsson to promote and recognise the use of IT by worthy non-profit organisations. Oracle donated in excess of £300,000 worth of the software and services underpinning the award winning systems.

Based in Stockport, Manchester, NLB is the free library service for visually impaired readers who want books in accessible formats.

The partnership project with Oracle involved a detailed scoping exercise to determine how the service provided by NLB could be improved using Oracle products and services. This was then followed by a skills transfer program, which led to a full design and build exercise. So Oracle not only provided funding and products to NLB but also shared premises/facilities and worked alongside NLB staff on the project. NLB are currently implementing the system.

NLB will be responsible for the ongoing sustainability of the website. Oracle will provide software updates and support.

"At Oracle, we produce tools that solve problems. Our database software is a key foundation of the information age, and it has helped support huge advances in technology, science, and quality of life.

We're mindful that not everyone has shared in this bounty. Perhaps that's why Oracle as a corporation, and Oracle employees as individuals, work actively to improve the quality of life for people and communities beset by problems and challenges."
Larry Ellison Chairman and Chief Executive Officer

For further information contact:
www.oracle com/corporate/community

Everyone favours ending ignorance, suffering, and waste. But preferring to solve problems, rather than managing their consequences, we favour concrete efforts that promise definite solutions. We think it's the most effective way to create real change.

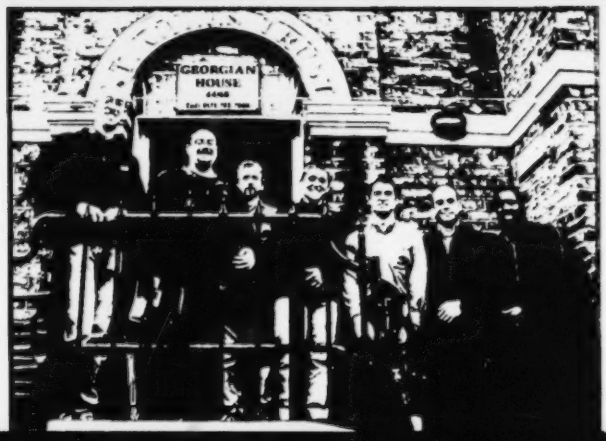
Larry Ellison
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Oracle

3¼ Computer refurbishing

Computers are set to become a major waste issue, the number of PCs in use is expected to top 1.1bn in 2007. A study found that, weight for weight, the average computer chip does more harm to the environment than the car.

Refurbishers support companies in their donation of old equipment to community groups by processing the PCs (wiping old data, etc). Business in the Communitys' comm.unity campaign can provide information on refurbishers, to companies wishing to take care of the environment and support access to technology for community groups and schools.

CREDIT SUISSE | FIRST BOSTON



case studies

Credit Suisse First Boston and St. Giles Trust

St. Giles Trust faces the same Information Technology infrastructure issues that often present huge problems to small charities with limited budgets. In London, Credit Suisse First Boston (CSFB) has used its in-house expertise to deliver an up-to-date IT resource for St. Giles Trust, a charity helping homeless people.

As part of this IT infrastructure project, CSFB assisted St. Giles Trust with several inter-related IT projects. First, CSFB's networking subcontractors (DACC) installed a network and hubs at St. Giles' offices. CSFB also donated a file-server and 30 individual workstations for the charity's staff and negotiated with Microsoft to secure complimentary software licenses. CSFB and DACC employees donated their own time to install and test the new hardware and software. For the final stage of this project, CSFB employees are designing and building an application to help St. Giles track the progress of clients through its services.

This is only part of CSFB's commitment to St. Giles, which began following a Business in the Community "Seeing is Believing" tour in March 2000. Jonathan Davie, Vice Chairman of CSFB and Chairman of the European Charities Committee has personally mentored the charity's director. CSFB also donated £75,000 towards the Trust's services and CSFB employees have enthusiastically supported the charity through events such as running the London Marathon.

Jonathan Davie, Chairman of the European Charities Committee said, "We have been very pleased to partner with St. Giles Trust on a variety of projects. Our colleagues in the IT department have done a great job helping the Trust address its technology issues. It has been a very rewarding experience for all of the volunteers involved."

For further information contact:
www.csfb.com

Our community experiences offer real benefits for our company, as well as the people who live and work in the communities we serve.

Jonathan Browning
Managing Director, Jaguar Cars Ltd

4.0
Longer term partnerships

The impact of projects can be increased by establishing longer term partnerships, whether involving large corporates or small businesses. Monitoring and evaluation of such projects is an important way of assessing their effectiveness and can provide great statistics when celebrating your successes with the media.

Digital Inclusion is a key component of BT's Corporate Social Responsibilty strategy and we are very excited to be involved in a partnership which embraces business, the voluntary and community sectors and enables our staff to get involved at grass roots level.

Mike Hughes
Head of Environment and CSR, BT

BT

CitizensOnline

EverybodyOnline

case studies

BT and Citizens Online - EverybodyOnline

Citizens Online a national charity committed to promoting access to the Internet and information technology for all members of the community, has teamed up with BT who through their Digital Inclusion programme are also keen to ensure that those disadvantaged by location, skills or economic factors don't miss out on the benefits that new technology can offer.

The project called EverybodyOnline is being piloted in seven diverse communities across the UK. Each community is the size of an electoral ward and has been chosen because it has below average household Internet connectivity and ranks amongst the most disadvantaged in the country on the multiple deprivation index.

A full time project officer has been appointed in each location and they have four key tasks:

- Local audit – mapping availability of local access points, training providers, potential partners, key local issues.
- Local action plan – establishing a steering group and designing a locally owned action plan to use ICT to address key local issues.
- Delivery – facilitating activity to improve awareness of ICT and to demonstrate the benefits of being online.
- Monitoring – capturing data, case studies, examples of good practice, feedback and follow-ups.

The local audits have revealed that many opportunities and facilities already exist for ICT training and Internet access and the emphasis for EverybodyOnline is on developing life skills and targeting those who are most daunted by the prospect of using new technology. Once they have taken the first steps they are sign-posted to established training providers. In some cases the barriers to access have been about poor bus services or lack of child care facilities and the EverybodyOnline project officers have taken the initiative to overcome these.

The seven projects include:

- St Stephen in Brannel – Cornwall
- Audley & Bignall End – Newcastle under Lyme
- Broad Green – Croydon
- Walker – Newcastle upon Tyne
- Wales – 2 projects opening May 2003
- Glasgow – thematic project opening June 2003

These are demonstration projects and the end result will be a toolkit that could be used by any community to promote and encourage ICT and Internet access as part of a regeneration or community development process.

"The real value of the EverybodyOnline project is its use of ICT as a tool for engaging with a community and helping the most disadvantaged acquire skills which may lead to new life opportunities."
John Fisher Chief Executive of Citizens Online

For further information contact:
john@citizensonline.org.uk
www.everybodyonline.org.uk
www.btplc.com/betterworld
www.citizensonline.org.uk

CISCO SYSTEMS

case studies

Cisco Networking Academy Program

The Cisco Networking Academy Program is a comprehensive e-learning program, which provides students with the Internet technology skills essential in a global economy. The Networking Academy program delivers Web-based content, online assessment, student performance tracking, hands-on-labs, instructor training and support, and preparation for industry standard certifications.

The Cisco Networking Academy Program helps bridge the gap between those who can effectively use new technology and communication tools, such as the Internet, and those who cannot. Academies located in under-served communities and countries help local people learn the IT skills they need to join the global Internet Economy.

In the UK, academies have been located in some of the most disadvantaged communities, as well as in organisations providing services for homeless people and young offenders institutions. In today's challenging job market, understanding workplace demands and ensuring workforce readiness are key components for success. Cisco Systems and its worldwide partners are developing opportunities for Academy students and graduates to get the real work experience they need today to compete.

For further information contact:
www.cisco.com/edu/emea/

Xansa revealed in its employee opinion survey that 74% of staff approve of the company's community programme and see it as a reason for staying with the company.

Cisco Systems have invested time and money that has made, and continues to make, a real difference to communities all around the world. We have events and programmes that are responsible for creating a positive working environment for employees.

Jane Joret
Community Investment Manager, Cisco Systems Ltd

4.1 Innovation in the use of technology

The uses to which ICT can be put are only limited by imagination. The way in which ICT will be used in the future is not clear, but many projects have demonstrated that ICT can be used to help regenerate communities and tackle social issues. Companies can particularly benefit from supporting projects in this arena, since it may open up new markets and give new insights to the potential and real use of their technologies.

This is an exciting application of mobile technology to a serious health issue that affects communities across Europe and particularly in the UK. We are especially pleased to offer support to the trial in the Thames Valley region, as this is where many of our staff are based.

Peter Erskine
CEO, mmO_2

O_2

case studies

O_2 - bringing asthma under control using mobile phone technology

O_2 is supporting healthcare solutions company e-San in its trial of a new solution for asthma management. The solution, developed by e-San in conjunction with the Department of Engineering Science at Oxford University, will enable patients to manage their asthma more effectively in order to reduce the severity of symptoms and the risk of hospitalisation. As a result, emergency visits by GPs will also decrease. The aim is to improve quality of life for asthma sufferers and enable GPs to use their time more effectively.

The solution overcomes the drawbacks inherent in the current home monitoring of patients' lung capacity, whereby results are recorded manually and viewed retrospectively by GPs, by automating the process to provide more accurate, real time information.

During the trial, which runs from February – November 2003, 100 asthma sufferers aged 12 to 55 from nine GP surgeries are measuring their lung capacity by using a peak flow meter attached to an O_2 xda mobile device. Readings are automatically recorded and transmitted over GPRS to a server, which charts each patient's results and detects whether there are discrepancies from expected trends. GPs are alerted by the system should these discrepancies persist, allowing them to contact patients to advise on treatment. GPs can view each patient's data via a secure website set up for this purpose. Whenever no readings have been received for more than a day, a text message reminder is automatically sent to the patient's xda.

"O_2's generous support of this project allows us to test the solution robustly. It is a pleasure to be working with a company that is prepared to provide its technology and support to develop solutions that will make a real impact on peoples' lives."
Professor Tarassenko, Oxford University.

Asthma is the most common chronic childhood illness in the UK, which has the highest number of asthma sufferers in Europe. 15% of the UK population suffer from the condition and the Thames Valley is the worst affected area.

As well as improving the health of asthma sufferers through more effective and accurate monitoring, the trialled solution has the potential to save time for hard-pressed GPs. There will also be a saving in health service costs if there is a reduction in the incidence of critical cases requiring hospitalisation.

The project is part of O_2's commitment to the communities it serves and its policy of applying its technology to address social issues. It also makes sound business sense as applications such as this being developed in the field of health care may in the future become widely used services.

For further information contact:
charlotte.hitchings@o2.com
www.mmo2.com/community

Community involvement only works if there is a business benefit, and as a result of our activities we are finding it is much easier to recruit certain types of staff, it also improves employee motivation and corporate reputation.

Henry Stewart
Happy Computers

accenture

case studies

Accenture - Poplar HARCA's Big IT Up project

In Tower Hamlets, a deprived borough just east of the City of London, the Poplar Housing and Regeneration Community Association (HARCA) is running an imaginative programme for preparing and inspiring disadvantaged young people for a future using Information Technology.

Against a background of overcrowding and deprivation, many young people in the area are playing truant and leaving school without qualifications. Many lack confidence and opportunities to achieve gainful employment, but many of them express an interest in "anything to do with computers". Given the estimates that IT skills are needed for 90% of jobs, the Community Regeneration team at Poplar HARCA were keen to explore whether disadvantaged and excluded youth could be encouraged into the economic mainstream through that interest in IT. Their 'Big IT Up' programme surprises the young people with what they can achieve. In a few sessions of their part-time course, they not only learn the basics of handling computers, but also build a PC from its components.

Accenture was involved in the project from the formative stage right through to completion of the programme. In addition to financial support from the Accenture Foundation, Accenture employees helped the course tutors draw up details of the programme, designed to keep the attention of young people. Successfully assembling a computer is very rewarding – but it takes time to complete. So, to keep the youngsters' interest, each session of the course combined the assembly work with hands on practice with various computer applications, from word processing to websites.

A team of Accenture volunteers from the company's London Capital Markets group were helper/mentors to the young people, introducing the applications and helping the participants get an encouraging, worthwhile experience in using them. For the volunteers, there is immense personal satisfaction in seeing the developing interest of the youngsters, and co-operating with their colleagues in Accenture to achieve this. For Accenture - a company whose core business is closely tied to using the power of information and communications technology to bring about major change, the project helps to demonstrate how that power can be harnessed to the help otherwise disadvantaged young people.

Following the success of the first course, when some of the youngsters went on to more advanced IT courses or into arrangements helping teach other young people to assemble computers, the project is now running its second course. As with the first group, the participants work together in pairs, learning, in a practical way, the benefits of co-operation. They are also encouraged to have their say in what computer applications they want to learn more about. The Accenture volunteers are continuing to help and support them in creating a future for themselves.

For further information contact:
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www.poplarharca.co.uk
james.woodhouse@accenture.com

Digital exclusion is the summation of a number of overlapping issues. Internet access points are still needed in some places and access to broadband is especially an issue in rural areas. Other issues include supporting the use of ICT by disabled people, elderly people and people with low levels of literacy. Development of easy-to-use, relevant content is a further issue. Another need is for support of SMEs in their use of ICT.

Border TV have produced and broadcast a series Web Works comprising of 12 two minute programmes, funded and sponsored by Scottish Enterprise, Dumfries and Galloway (SEDG), aimed at encouraging local businesses to make use of marketing and sales opportunities available via the Internet. A diverse range of businesses were featured, from a company selling historic newspapers worldwide, to a weather forecasting and information services provider. The strategy established with SEGD was to encourage firms to use the Internet and world wide web to get positive marketing messages out and develop new sales channels to their customers.

The response to the series has been exceptional and helped the local Border community with the recovery from the foot and mouth disaster.

"The Pub is the Hub" is a concept promoted by Rural Action at Business in the Community, with the idea that rural business (e.g. pubs, post offices etc) can survive by diversifying. Case studies include pubs such as The Miners Arms in Brassington, Derbyshire, which has provided Internet access and training for their community. This supports the development of skills locally and also brings in new business to the pub or post office.

AbilityNet, a charity supporting the use of technology by disabled people, has formed partnerships with companies such as IBM, Microsoft, BT, Hewlett Packard and Agilent Technologies, who all offer space in their premises for AbilityNet centres. There are now 11 centres in the UK in total, and one benefit for the businesses is the immediate access to expertise and training for their staff, which supports their ability to employ disabled people. This is a boost to the companies since disabled people are more likely to stay with the same employer once in a post.

Microsoft AGE Concern

case studies

Microsoft and Age Concern - Bringing IT to Later Life

Microsoft and Age Concern recognise that older people are in danger of being left out by the digital society. Since 2000, Microsoft and Age Concern have been working together with the aim of Bringing IT to later life. The partnership provides older people the opportunity to be included in the IT revolution and to experience the benefits of IT, perhaps for the first time.

Mobile Internet Taster Sessions (MITS) have been introduced to help elderly people get online. These sessions have enabled active older volunteers, working out of nine central locations and using portable equipment, to visit local day centres and sheltered and residential housing schemes, in order to introduce the World Wide Web and email to less mobile, older people who would not otherwise have access to IT. After the session, equipment is left at the venue so people can continue to explore the Internet and benefit from the opportunities it opens up.

Over 4500 older people are believed to have benefited from the scheme to date. Joyce, 76, was introduced to computers through MITS at her sheltered accommodation in North Staffordshire. Joyce now uses the Internet to keep in touch with her nephew in Sierra Leone, to play games and to design her own cards. Since taking part in MITS, Joyce has become an enthusiastic volunteer trainer with the MITS project, an activity that she finds very satisfying and enjoyable. "I'm teaching computer skills because I want to show people of my age what they can do on the Internet, and how easy it is - if I can do it so can they! This is one of the best things I have ever done and it's opened up so many doors for me. Microsoft believes that older people are a part of the community in danger of being neglected by the digital society, yet they are one of the groups who stand to benefit most from it. Information Technology enables people to stay in touch with family and friends, access information and services, and be active in society. It can help to address issues of decreased mobility and increased isolation."
Steve Harvey, Director of People, Profit and Loyalty, Microsoft.

For further information contact:
www.Microsoft.co.uk
www.ageconcern.org.uk

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The communications consultancy Fleishman-Hillard found that 87% of European employees feel greater loyalty to socially engaged employers.

MARKS & SPENCER

Disabled GO
www.disabledgo.info

Marks & Spencer's and DisabledGo

Marks & Spencer have acted as the development sponsor for DisabledGo: a remarkable initiative aimed at using the Internet to genuinely include the 8.7 million disabled people in the UK, their families, carers and friends in the local and wider community.

One of the key barriers to the full inclusion of disabled people in society is a lack of information about what services, venues and businesses are accessible to their particular needs.

DisabledGo aims to end that exclusion by providing fine-grain, detailed, disabled access information on a town-by-town, city-by-city basis, covering over 1,200 venues in each location. A wide range of venues are covered such as cinemas, pubs, parks, restaurants, train stations, job-centres and citizen advice bureau from the myriad of disabled perspectives: hearing impaired, disabled-walker, vision impaired, wheelchair users and so on. All the information is available free on the Internet for everyone and anyone who wants to use it.

The Internet is the perfect delivery vehicle for DisabledGo as it can easily convey the enormous amount of data that DisabledGo collects. Indeed, Marks & Spencer's sponsorship enabled DisabledGo to employ 'next generation' technology to make the DisabledGo a leading example of accessible websites with a host of accessibility features and intelligent information filter systems.

However, Marks & Spencer and DisabledGo were concerned that the digital divide might prevent potential beneficiaries of the project accessing the information. To help guard against that, DisabledGo visits local voluntary, community, advocacy and charitable groups for disabled people and senior citizens and provides free training sessions on how to use the DisabledGo service. The local membership who do not have access to the Internet are then encouraged to contact their local community group for information.

Speaking at the launch of the new website in January, the managing director and founder of DisabledGo – wheelchair user, Gregory Burke – said, "without the visionary support of Marks & Spencer, DisabledGo would not be able to directly benefit the lives of so many people on a daily basis. Their financial and professional support has enabled DisabledGo to employ cutting-edge technology to bridge the digital divide and thus offer choice, empowerment and freedom to disabled people and their families who have hitherto been expected to live on the fringes of society."

Barry Stevenson, the Retail Director of Marks & Spencer, argues that DisabledGo fulfils a desperately important social need and that Marks & Spencer are involved for two main reasons. "Firstly, Marks and Spencer have been traditionally associated with projects that empower the community and make them more inclusive. We take our corporate citizenship seriously. For us, our strap-line 'Exclusively for Everyone' is not a slogan. It means something. Marks & Spencer's are committed to meeting our customers' needs regardless of any additional requirements they may have. Secondly, because DisabledGo has the power to radically benefit the lives of the vast majority of disabled people, it enables its corporate sponsors to reach a market worth some £45 billion a year and access the 6.8 million carers in the UK – most of whom are women, and women make most family purchasing decisions. So DisabledGo offers a rare virtuous circle for businesses which seek to improve the bottom line but take their obligations to society seriously."

DisabledGo is currently available in Brighton, Cardiff, Croydon, Edinburgh and Westminster. Launched in January 2003, DisabledGo has enjoyed 170,000 hits in its first month. Marks & Spencer are actively helping DisabledGo to secure other prestige sponsors who wish to join an exclusive sponsorship club to enable DisabledGo to roll out to 15 towns and cities across the UK in the European Year of Disabled People, 2003.

For further information contact:
Freda.Pinner@marks-and-spencer.com
info@disabledGO.info
www.disabledgo.info

5.0
Smaller Companies

With small businesses representing 98% of all UK businesses, 55% of the workforce and 51% of business turnover the impact they have on society has never been more acute. Small businesses can invest in their local communities in a way that will benefit their business. Local projects can be great ways for a company to raise its profile and networking opportunities, while volunteering can be a very cost effective way to develop staff skills.

Thinking strategically about who you want to support and why, rather than 'ad hoc' community involvement will ensure the benefits to your business are maximised. Particularly the case when volunteering IT skills, a small business can follow up an initial meeting with a community group by email contact and work can be completed remotely.

CommunityMark is a way in which small businesses can receive recognition for the work that they have done in their communities. For more information: www.bitc.org.uk/programmes/programme_directory/community_mark

case studies

Happy Computers – Training the Trainers in Uganda

Happy Computers is a computer training company with a difference. Set up in 1990 by Henry Stewart in his back room in Hackney, it now employs 42 people and trains 20,000 people a year. Based on involving people and making IT training fun, the company has won a range of awards for its quality, customer service, for social responsibility and for creating a great place to work.

The company has entered into a number of projects that seek to use its resources to benefit the wider community based on the idea of 'mutual benefit'. The company aims to bring benefit to the community but also to the company itself. One example, based on sending trainers to Uganda, is given below.

In spring 2002 Happy Computers partnered with PADEAP, (Pan African Development, Education and Advocacy Programme), an organisation dedicated to assisting disadvantaged and marginalised people across Africa. The aim was to use the company's skills and resources to improve the training capability and computer knowledge of a Community IT Training Centre in Africa – while bringing benefits to Happy staff in gaining wider experience and opportunity.

The project was made possible through Happy Computers' TimeBank scheme. Under this scheme, 100 days are made available (an average of 2.5 per employee), in which any employee can apply to draw for a project which has 'mutual benefit', both in terms of social impact for the charity and to benefit Happy Computers. 20 days were drawn for this project. (This is in addition to the Voluntary Day, where employees can volunteer one day a month, fully paid, for a charity of their choice).

Two trainers flew out to Uganda to work at the PADEAP IT Community Training Centre for and with the trainers. The overall aim was sustainable development, not just to provide training but to leave behind a training centre with increased capability, greater staff skills and confidence and more training resources. Training included both MS Office packages and Train the Trainer courses, based around the TAP quality framework of the Institute of IT Training in the UK. Materials were also donated such as training manuals, demos and exercises and Happy Computers' pens. Free access was also given to the company's award winning online learning materials both via the Internet and on CD-Rom.

The overall result, confirmed by evaluations, was that the Ugandan trainers were indeed more confident and capable, both in their training delivery skills and their product knowledge.

The project is being used as a model by PADEAP in their new centre in Nigeria and planned centres in Ghana and The Gambia. In addition two other Happy Computers' trainers are planning a similar project for Cambodia.

The impact on Happy Computers trainers was equally great, with 37% of the company being involved in the project. It was a hugely motivational experience, creating a growing partnership between them and PADEAP and their partners in Kampala and London.

The original plan for training abroad was based on analysis of reasons for staff leaving – at one point over 50% left to travel! The aim was to benefit a community abroad while meeting staff wanderlust. There were also benefits in terms of marketing, from press coverage and being short-listed for International Training Project of the Year by the Institute of IT Training.

For further information contact:
happy@happy.co.uk
www.happy.co.uk

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Cause Related Marketing

Cause Related Marketing is a commercial activity by which businesses and charities or causes form a partnership with each other to market an image, product or service for mutual benefit (see www.crm.org.uk for more information).

According to Business in the Community's Cause Related Marketing Tracker, the biggest programme in 2001 was the Tesco Computers for Schools scheme, which put £7,500,000 worth of IT equipment into UK schools last year.

case studies

PC World - Ink for IT

Established in 2000 Ink for IT is the PC World cause related marketing scheme which supports the development of computer skills in schools, by providing free IT equipment in return for used, recyclable, inkjet cartridges. Each cartridge is worth up to £2.10 to a school or a certain amount of points, the average cartridge being worth four points. Just over 250 points converts into a Desktop PC.

The scheme has been tremendously successful to date with over 5,200 schools registered and over £172,000 given back to schools to purchase IT equipment from PC World stores.

Approximately 90% of the millions of cartridges sold each year are thrown away and end up in landfill sites, so there are plenty of cartridges available for recycling.

The headmaster of the programme's top performing school, Mr Syllan Roberts of Ysgol Brynsaron School, commented: "The children are really happy they've come top of the schools league, especially after working so hard to return as many cartridges as possible. We've encouraged parents to become involved too, with one dad getting all his colleagues at the Police Headquarters to help with the collection. Ink for I.T. has been a great success for our school and the kids will be looking forward to enjoying the benefits of their new DVD PC."

Schools register to take part in the scheme and a Ink for IT guide and collecting materials are sent to the school.

Schools collect empty ink cartridges from various sources. These cartridges are returned to a freepost address on a regular basis. Most of the returned cartridges can be recycled, however some are not. Ink for IT is happy to take back non-recyclable cartridges and dispose of them appropriately.

All of the recycled cartridges will be credited to the registered schools account and twice a year a voucher is issued. These vouchers are similar to a gift voucher and can be spent on anything in a PC World store or saved up to purchase a specific item.

Bonus schemes are offered to boost collection totals at different times of the year. Additional credits are made to the schools account based on volume of cartridges returned. Incentives are offered to schools collecting and returning the most cartridges. Prizes have included PCs, printers, digital cameras and educational software titles.

Ink for IT bins are also placed in every PC World store and within Head office for collecting ink cartridges from staff and customers who are not able to recycle for a school. The cartridges collected through the head office scheme are donated to a local school to boost their collection totals.

For further information contact:
www.pcworld.co.uk/inkforit

Next steps

For business

Effective management of business resources in community investment initiatives will maximise impact on the digital inclusion issue as well as providing benefits for the business.

The list of resources below include help to establish a community investment strategy. In summary:

- Secure senior management support
- Identify what your business wishes to achieve from the work (raising profile, staff development etc) and set objectives/action plan.
- Ensure management understands the programme and supports it
- Identify resources, including personnel, to achieve the objectives and consult with employees.
- Find community partners, perhaps with the help of a broker such as comm.unity.
- Ensure the goals of your partner can be achieved alongside your business goals.
- For technical ICT projects, use the tips on www.IT4Communities.org.uk
- Communicate your activity internally and externally and celebrate employees efforts.
- Start small, but review and scale-up where possible.
- Could other partners, such as other businesses, add value to and benefit from what you intend to do? Share learning with other businesses who have had similar experiences.

For community organisations

Think strategically about your approach to working with businesses:

- Examine your organisation's long and short term needs.
- Consider what business support would be suitable. Think beyond cash and identify the benefits to business of being involved.
- Look for any particular types of business which might have a special interest in your charitable cause and the type of support you are asking for.
- Research potential companies, especially their policy on community involvement. Send a brief proposal to the community affairs manager or MD for a smaller company.
- Build relationships over time and integrate it into your development strategy.

Corporate Social Responsibility is a recognition that trust is critical to success, that reputation management is essential, that a brand must enjoy people's confidence and that social responsibility is not an optional extra but a necessity.

The Rt. Hon. Gordon Brown
Chancellor of the Exchequer

Resources

www.acbas.org - Ashridge Centre for Business and Society is the leading UK business school for CCI and runs twice yearly residential courses on CCI management.

www.bitc.org.uk/comm.unity - Business in the Community campaign which addresses the digital divide. Contains many resources for both businesses and community organisations working against the digital divide.

www.bitc.org.uk/education - Business in the Community campaign to promote education -- business partnerships.

www.bitc.org.uk/programmes/programme_directory/corporate_community_investment/ - Offers best practice and case studies on how companies are integrating CCI into their mainstream business practices.

www.bitc.org.uk/programmes/programme_directory/cares - Business in the Community's employee volunteering programme.

www.bcconnections.org.uk - Business Community Connections, a charity dedicated to helping other charities obtain more support from business.

www.bsr.org - Business for Social Responsibility, the leading US NGO website.

www.CCInet.org - Corporate Community Involvement site from the Charities Aid Foundation, which links to hundreds of company CCI web pages.

www.cecile.net - Cecile is a European network of partnership organisations and companies working in CCI.

www.corporate-citizenship.co.uk - The Corporate Citizenship Company provides consultancy on the management of corporate citizenship at local, national, regional and international levels.

www.crm.org.uk - Cause Related Marketing campaign of Business in the Community.

www.dfes.gov.uk/ukonlinecentres - Centres which are part of the government drive to "e-enable" Britain by providing access to ICT.

www.digitaldividend.org - Website dedicated to exploring creative approaches to bridge the global digital divide.

www.employeevolunteering.org.uk - Resources and case studies on employee volunteering.

www.professionals4free.org.uk - Lists places where community and voluntary organisations can get free professional help.

www.inkinddirect.org - Takes excess products from companies and provides them at to charities at very low cost.

www.it4communities.org.uk - An initiative to encourage companies, employees and individual IT professionals to volunteer their IT skills for the benefit of charities.

www.learndirect.co.uk - Provides distance learning and online courses as well as part and full time classroom courses throughout the UK. Learn Direct centres may also be UK online centres.

www.nationalebp.org - Education Business Partnership network which supports the brokerage of business partnerships with schools

www.prohelp.org.uk - National network of 1,000 professional firms who give their time and expertise for free to community and voluntary organisations.

www.thepolitician.org/csr - Parliamentary Brief - publishes a broad range of excellent articles on the subject of corporate social responsibility.

Business – community partnerships have proven successful in promoting the use of information and communication technologies. The comm.unity campaign of Business in the Community is working in association with the Department for Education and Skills to increase such partnerships.

The digital age has an impact on most areas of our lives, such as the economy, communication across our communities, the environment and education. However, access to the underpinning information and communication technologies (ICT) is not equal across society. It is in the interest of business to ensure that the social issue of "digital inclusion" is addressed.

This brochure looks at ways in which business of all sizes can work in partnership with community initiatives to promote digital inclusion; with benefits to both business and the community. Case studies highlight the partnership models and community investment strategies which have been successfully applied to ensure everyone benefits from the digital age.

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